

The History of the Immigration Bureau

Before King Rama VII issued a law in 1927 foreigners could enter and leave Thailand freely. In that year the king created the Immigration Department, not as a separate organization but as a part of the Ministry of the Interior. Following the procedures in many other countries the new department was to control the arrivals and departures of foreigners. With only 50 officers under his control, the first commanding officer was Pol. Col. Wichai Prachabal.

One of the many changes to the political system that came to Thailand in 1932 was the change of name to the Immigration Division and the change of attachment to the Police Department. Unfortunately the Immigration division had its budget cut because of the economic crisis called the Great Depression that was sweeping the world. After three years the Immigration Division was moved to a new location and had its immigration checkpoints and offices increased.

Immigration officers were no longer civil servants as they were made police officers and given special uniforms in 1940. The former German Embassy became its new head office.

In 1965 a massive reorganization took place as the bureaucracy expanded. There were to be 5 command divisions and 13 sections as well as 58 regional immigration offices. In the same year a communication center was established as new immigration offices were opened in provinces.

The Soi Suanphlu head office began construction in 1973 and by 1980 there was a total of 1047 positions. Seven years later another 307 new positions were created. After another three years the Foreigners Registry was upgraded to a full command position and the bureaucracy was again reorganized into new sub-sections with 672 new positions created in 1990. In order to guarantee the highest possible level of efficiency and efficacy the Immigration Bureau with 4 commands was born in 1993. What does the future hold for the Bureau? Will there be more organizational changes?

1. King Rama VII started the Immigration Department because ____
 1. he didn't like foreigners
 2. he didn't like people moving freely
 3. he was king for a long time
 4. he wanted to control how foreigners came and left the kingdom
2. The word "issued" most likely means _____.
 1. wrote
 2. authorized
 3. entered
 4. left
3. The Immigration Department's mission was to _____.
 1. command Pol. Col. Wichai Prachabal
 2. organize arrivals and departures
 3. control 50 officers
 4. proceed to other countries
4. Which of the following is NOT true of the changes in 1932?
 1. The name was changed to the Immigration Division.
 2. The political system in Thailand changed.
 3. The Division became part of the Police Department.
 4. The Immigration Department became political.
5. Because of the Great Depression, _____.
 1. the Immigration Division had its budget reduced
 2. many officers lost their jobs
 3. the Immigration Division lost its headquarters
 4. checkpoints and offices were decreased

16. After the Second World War Immigration officers _____.
1. became civil servants
 2. were not allowed to wear uniforms
 3. became police officers
 4. were dominated by police officers
17. The word "bureaucracy" most likely means _____.
1. oppressive rules
 2. a government organization
 3. a reorganization
 4. a powerful officer
18. The communications center was opened in 1965 because _____.
1. there was a big reorganization
 2. there were five command divisions
 3. there were 13 sections
 4. there was a need to communicate with provincial offices
19. Which of the following is NOT true? During the period from 1973 to 1990, _____.
1. Soi Suanphlu became the Division's head office
 2. new sub-sections were created
 3. the Foreigners Registry was downgraded
 4. there were many new positions added to the Immigration Division
20. The name was changed to the Immigration Bureau in 1993 to _____.
1. show a desire to improve efficiency
 2. have four commands
 3. be re-born
 4. have more organizational changes